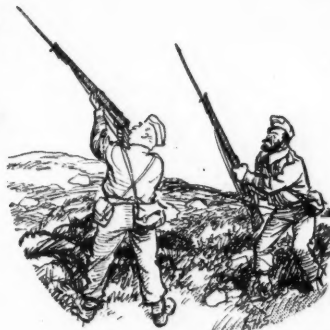




# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CXCIX No. 5188

August 28 1940

## Charivaria

ALTHOUGH Lord BEAVERBROOK's campaign for the collection of waste aluminium is now closed, contributions continue to arrive in this country by air from Germany.

Cricketers amongst the Australian troops in this country are said to be on tenterhooks waiting to bowl the first "Molotoff bomb" to HITLER's opening pair.

"The bottom has fallen out of Marshal GOERING's invincible air force," says a writer. Not to speak of the sides and the top.

"The English cannot make coffee like the Germans," boasts a German radio speaker. We could if we had the strawberry-leaves and other ingredients they use.



It has been rumoured that HITLER may drop GOERING. This is no doubt his secret weapon.

"Auctioneers don't make many friends," states a novelist. Merely nodding acquaintances.

A paragraphist wonders what would happen if Herr HITLER boarded a London omnibus. He would just have to "pass further dahn the car" like the rest of us.

A newspaper correspondent says that on an East Coast beach he saw a sunburnt soldier wearing only shorts and a revolver. Browning weather, evidently.



"Heaven knows how Dr. GOEBBELS made all his money," says a gossip writer. That is probably why he always looks so worried.

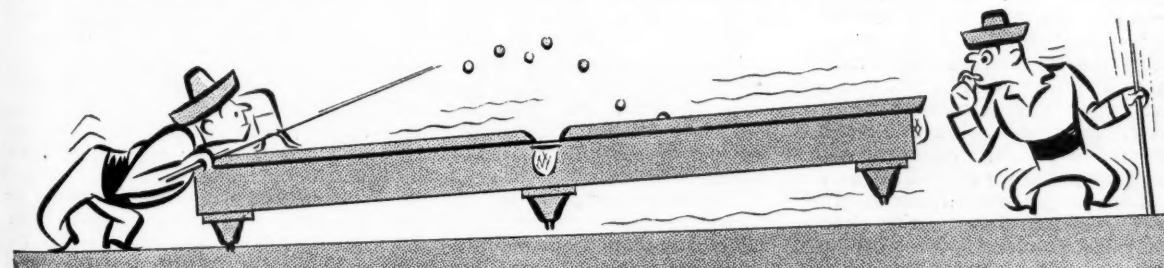
"Germany must be getting short of pilates."

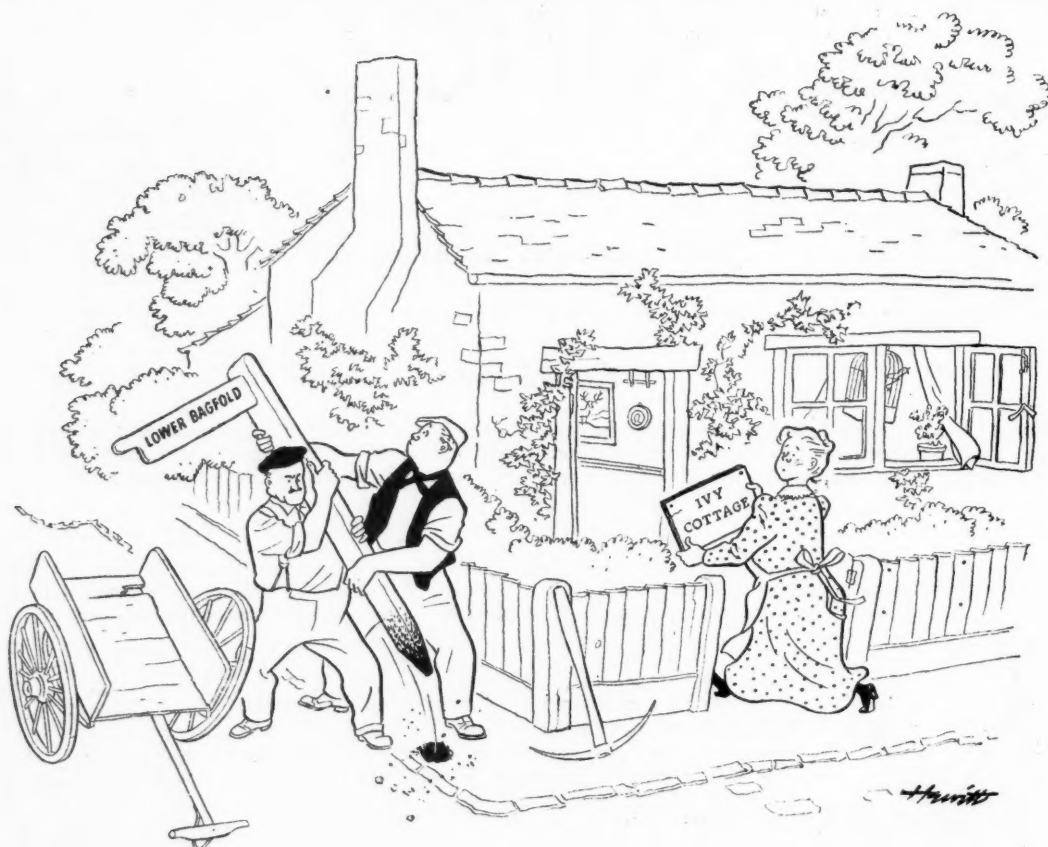
Schoolboy's essay.

She has her HEROD still.

"It is not much fun having to sleep in a tin-helmet," said an air warden on the wireless recently. And only very small air wardens can do it.

In one South American town there were twenty earthquake shocks in two days. This sort of thing of course is a severe set-back to snooker.





### Our Branch Line Gets Into the News.

**W**E have an innocent little railway connecting us with the main line about ten miles off. It is served by a train of two open coaches—one for smokers and the other for non-smokers.

The track lies through fields of corn and wheat and barley, potatoes and beet. There are several picturesque villages and farms to be surveyed at leisure by the passengers, for the little train is not fast-moving. The passengers nearly all know one another and exchange gossip to beguile the time. It is a sleepy, friendly, happy-go-lucky little train which harmonizes with the landscape and offends no one. It takes the level crossings gently, for you never know who might be dawdling over: Ted Barrett with a wagon, or Doctor Miles in his dusty little Ford.

The stations are all composed of superannuated railway carriages and a few yards of wooden fencing. And yet this shy and unassuming little railway

was bombed by Nazi airmen a week or two ago.

I was returning from London that evening and boarded the little shuttle train at the junction. It was a lovely harvest day and I settled down to enjoy the half-hour's run, or saunter, to —. The smoking-carriage had seats at the side and an aisle down the middle. There were not many passengers—one or two business men, four women and three or four soldiers. Two of the women were sitting opposite to me talking on domestic affairs.

When we stopped at — I heard the distant sound of aeroplanes, but as we left the station the noise of the train soon made me forget about it; besides, we have all got so used to the droning of planes that one takes little notice of it.

The woman opposite looked upwards out of the window. "There's ever so many aeroplanes up there," she said. I looked; there were about fifteen, I

reckoned: they were coming behind us about four hundred feet up. Some of the other passengers put their heads out of the window and there was speculation as to whether they were Germans or not. I returned to my crossword. At that moment there was a tremendous concussion and the train shuddered. I saw great masses of dirt flying through the air and somebody said, "My God!" I heard one of the soldiers call out: "Get your heads under the seats, quick!" We all scrambled down and lay on the dusty floor with our heads as far under the seats as we could manage, and then there came a succession of thuds—one, two, three; a pause. I was acutely aware of the vulnerability of my back. Four more thuds and again silence.

Somebody said, "Better not get up yet, there may be some more," so we crouched for about ten minutes. We must have presented a curious sight if

any disinterested person could have seen us. I imagine a raid on an ostrich farm would not have looked more ludicrous. The train had stopped after the first explosion and there was a deadly stillness. At last we all got up and moved cautiously to the windows, all talking together and laughing nervously. Our carriage had not been damaged, not even a pane of glass broken. The air was full of thin smoke which veiled the sunshine, and through it we saw, beyond a wide field, flames rising from some farm buildings, including a large Dutch barn—a horrible sight in that beautiful serene landscape. More planes, six this time, and we were on the point of diving for safety when the soldiers reassured us. "Our lads," they told us; "they're after them." Some of us climbed out of the train to see what damage had been done.

Forty yards behind us the lines were torn up and a large bomb crater was right in the middle of the track. We

resumed our journey and by the time we reached the terminus we had discussed the whole adventure from every angle and felt that bond of comradeship that is produced by a common danger.

I have never seen the proverbial reserve of English fellow travellers being so completely broken down.

The Nazi High Command Communiqué states:—

"On Friday, August 16th, our aircraft successfully bombed an important railway line near ——. The whole railway system of South-East England was completely disorganized, a troop train, crowded with soldiers, was completely wiped out and a large aerodrome close to the railway containing five hundred planes was burnt to ashes in a few minutes.

The inhabitants of the country round about are completely demoralized and are clamouring for peace."

### Research Point

TELL me,  
 you who are old . . .  
 for I am young . . .  
 Whose ingenuity,  
 showmanship,  
 tenuous subtlety of thought,  
 genius . . .  
 in fact,  
 whose immortal hand  
 and eye  
 first-ordained,  
 and for ever,  
 that  
 the man  
 who feeds the mackerel  
 to the trained seals  
 in a circus  
 always  
 is dressed,  
*cap à pied*,  
 like an Admiral of the Fleet?



"I think it was called 'The Mixture.'"

## Lecturette

I STAND alone on a kind of platform or dais shaking all over, livid in the face and with a pronounced sensation of suffocation. These are the symptoms of phosgene poisoning, from which, however, I do not believe myself to be suffering. Victims of phosgene poisoning do not stand alone on platforms; it is against regulations. They lie on stretchers covered with warm blankets and are given sips of hot sweet tea.

I am about to deliver a lecture to a class of prospective officers, future leaders of men whose faces as I survey them now give me little or no hope for the survival of the British Empire. I never saw a more revolting crew. Ordinarily, when I am among them sitting in comfortable obscurity at my desk, I find them a tolerable enough lot of men—keen on their work, kind to children, rare performers at P.T. and the difficult art of turning about in slow time. But now that I am up here and they are down there, waiting with obscene relish for me to make a fool of myself, I see them for what they are—as smug, self-satisfied, ham-faced a collection of congenital sadists as you could wish to meet.

The purpose of this lecture that I am about to give is not to instruct. I shall tell nobody anything that he did not know already. It is simply to confirm in the mind of the officer with the cold grey eye who sits, notebook on knee, at the back of the room, the suspicion he has long entertained that I am unfit to instruct anybody in anything. My name has come out of a hat (I have noticed that when there is anything bad going my name always does come out of the hat, as readily as a conjurer's rabbit), and I am obliged to speak for ten minutes on a given subject. The subject upon which I am going to speak to-day is the North Pole.

"The subject upon which I am going to speak to you to-day, gentlemen, is the North Pole."

There must be something wrong here. Nobody could possibly speak for ten minutes about the North Pole. Even if you had been to the Pole I do not see what you could find to say about it except that it was cold, white and either infested or not infested with Polar bears. These are interesting facts, but they don't lead anywhere. They lack meat. I take a hasty glance at my notebook and observe that I have underestimated the scope of the lecture. It appears that I am to speak not merely of the North Pole,

but of the three Norths—True North, Magnetic North and Grid North. I have made a bad start. The suffocating sensation is intensified.

Will no one cover me with warm blankets and give me a sip of hot sweet tea?

I turn my back on the class and face the blackboard. It is not that I have anything to write on it—I wish to heaven I had; but it makes a change to turn round. Prominently displayed on the board, remnant of some earlier lecture, is the single and significant word

### DRAINAGE.

Instantly there flashes into my mind a host of information about Field Engineering. Goodness, how I could talk to these boys about Field Engineering! I could tell them the depth of trenches and the height of parapets. I could tell them of fire-steps, elbow-rests, traverses, duck-boards and weapon-pits. I could entrance them with tales of brush-wood revetting and how to windlass concertina-wire to upright pickets. I might, if time allowed, go into the whole broad question of camp sanitation. The thing would be a riot.

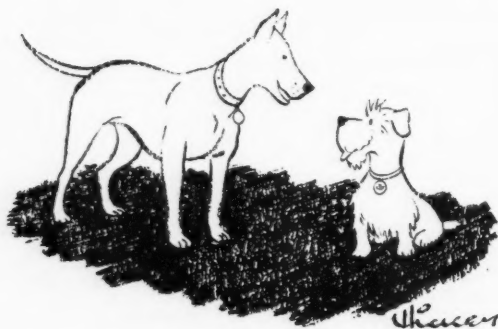
However, at the moment I have to speak about the Three Norths. Once upon a time there were Three Norths, a Big North, a Little North and a Medium-sized Magnetic sort of North who lived at the top of a tree and was ever so attractive . . . This will never do. I must pull myself together.

I turn to face the class again and in a queer high-pitched voice inform them that True North is the North Pole, that is to say that if you are facing the North Pole you are facing true North. Or put it this way: if you draw a line from yourself to the North Pole, that is the direction of the North Pole, which is true North. This seems to me clear and well put, and I am beginning to feel better when some fool asks me where the North Pole is. I am flabbergasted by such ignorance, but say that it is at the top of the world of course. He says, "How do you know where the top of the world is?" and I say, "How do you know where the top of an orange is?" He says by the little dent where it came off the thingummy, but he doesn't imagine you'd find one of those at the North Pole, and what about a rubber ball? I say, "What do you mean—what about a rubber ball?" and he says, "Well, where's the top of that?" I have no idea where the top of a rubber ball is and say so, pointing out that at the moment we are not discussing the tops of rubber balls, but the North Pole, a very different matter. This silences him, but it also unfortunately silences me, as I cannot remember where I am or what I am talking about. I have therefore to play for time by turning to the board and drawing a circle on it—no easy feat. I then put a small mark at the top of the circle and label it, very firmly, NORTH POLE.

That seems to be about all I have to say on the subject of True North.

"Now," I say more brightly than I feel, "for Magnetic North." I tell them all about Magnetic North. I describe it as a great deposit of iron somewhere in the cold northern wastes, rarely visited by man, but irresistible to compass needles. I am good about Magnetic North. I make it live. "Keep this up," I say to myself, "you're doing fine. Another minute or so ought to see you through," and I steal a glance at my watch.

I have been up here for two minutes, fifteen seconds. Would someone oblige me with a stretcher? H. F. E.



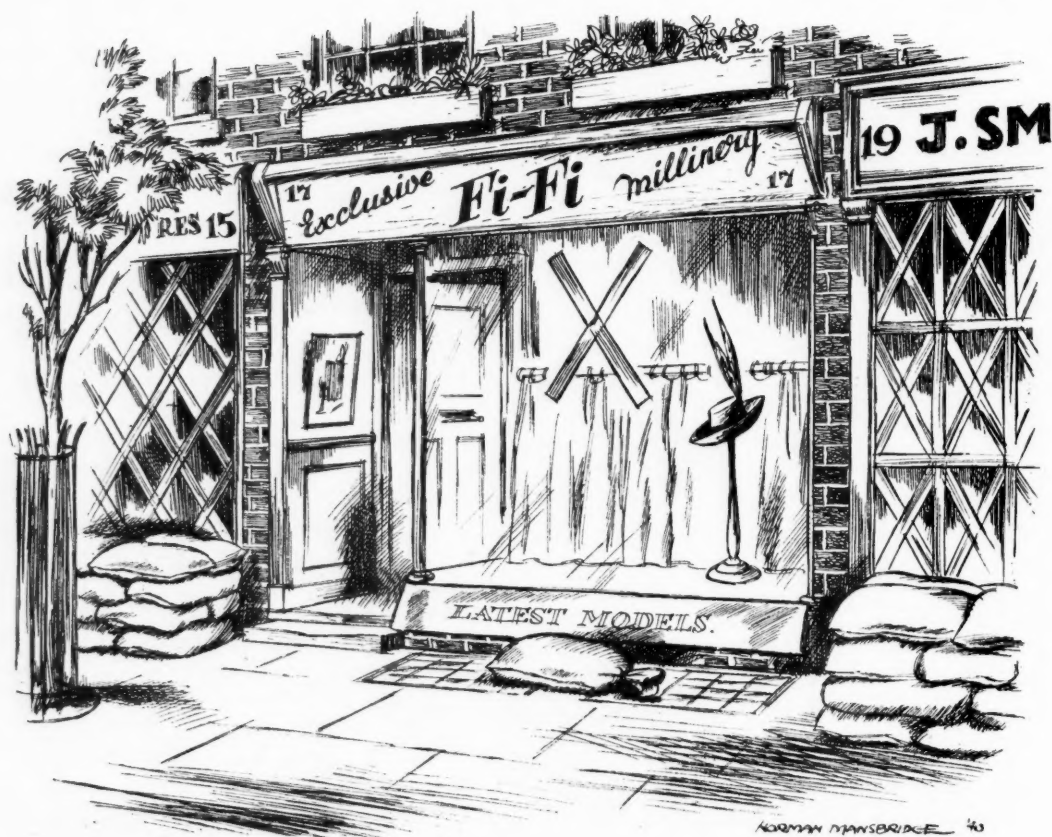
"I should say things ARE looking up, what with everyone leaving boxes of bones for us near their dust-bins."





### NEW GAME FOR NEPTUNE

"Bring 'em down, boys. I'll collect the pieces."



## Home Guard Goings-On

### Action Station

**W**HEN we heard that we were to be given action stations, those of us with a knowledge of military jargon nodded soberly and squared our shoulders. The rest just nodded soberly and awaited more precise information before putting fresh strain on muscles which have been somewhat over-taxed of late; but when they understood what England and our Platoon-Commander expected they too squared their shoulders, some of them going so far as to thrust out their jaws and rub their hands. We were ready for anything—or so we thought.

Speaking for our own section, it turned out that there were several things we were by no means ready for. We were not ready, for example, to be allotted the roughest, the toughest, the least sheltered and most gorse-ridden action station for miles around, defending the junction of two main roads.

We also found that the sort of action we were ready for was not the sort (at this stage, at any rate) which our superiors had in mind.

Our task, we learned eventually, was to cut down the gorse, with its accompanying tangle of bracken, heather and occasional young oak-trees, in order to open up what our Section-Leader termed "an arc of fire from a prepared strong point"—or, in our own words, to clear the ground and dig a trench. Looking back, it is amusing to recall that we thought it would be as simple as that.

Before going up for the first time I told a friend of mine that I had an hour or so's gorse-clearing to do, and he said the simplest way was to get a hoe and just hoe the stuff up by the roots. I passed on this tip to the rest of the section, but I think my friend's gorse must have been some other variety. Ours grew shoulder-high, with

stems as thick as our ankles and a good deal better protected; it had been there for centuries, and resented interference. When we approached it we were savagely bayoneted all over our bodies, and retired in disorder. Then we took our hoes back home and returned with axes and saws, bill-hooks and pitchforks, and many indeterminate implements with long handles.

The gorse scored its first blow at our morale when our Section-Leader was sketching out a plan of campaign. Stepping back to point his remarks with a sweep of the hand, he suddenly vanished from sight, leaving no trace but the echoes of his voice and a plum-coloured felt hat. One of the quicker-witted of us forced his way gallantly to the spot and abruptly disappeared also. The rest of us advanced more circumspectly, and were able to halt ourselves on the edge of a gorse-hidden

chasm. There was a stirring in the depths, and presently we hoisted out the victims by lowering the handles of agricultural implements.

"We shall have to watch out for that," said our Section-Leader after a few less apposite observations, and staunching his wounds he took three paces to the left and was swallowed up a second time.

After this we tested our footholds with care. This was just as well, because we discovered by painful degrees that the preponderance of concealed pits over level ground was considerable, and on the first few evenings it was seldom that the whole section was to be seen above ground all at once. Sometimes they vanished singly and without warning, sometimes three at a time, sinking more slowly through the lacerating barbs, their faces displaying growing alarm until they finally subsided out of sight.

It took us a fortnight to clear the gorse, and the outlay for protective clothing was considerable. Most of it was experimental. Rubber boots to the knee, for instance, seemed at first an inspiration, but the prickles soon hit on the idea of detaching themselves from the parent branch and working into our boot-tops, down our legs and under the soles of our feet, knowing full well that there was no unfortified spot where we could sit down to take off our boots.

In the hope of retaining a few shreds of skin on our hands we bought many pairs of gloves. The wearing of three pairs, while discouraging straightforward penetration, again brought out the enemy's cunning; the prickles filtered down our wrists into our palms, so that as we seized our weapons firmly we yelped and hurled them down cursing. Taking off three pairs of moist gloves and putting them on again at ten-minute intervals made alarming inroads into our hours of daylight. Eventually we took to working in breeches, leggings and greatcoats—a costume not otherwise to be recommended for strenuous pursuits on summer evenings.

But we cleared the gorse, and buried it in its own pits, and danced on it in demoniac glee. We told our wives we had done this, and they said it was cruel of us to treat "the pretty yellow flowers" so. But we felt no shame.

In the centre of our station was a large crescent-shaped pit into which all of us had fallen on many occasions. This pit we did not fill with gorse, because by some extraordinary natural oversight it was perfectly placed, and almost perfectly shaped for conversion into our "strong point" (or trench).

In front of it we left one more pit in its original camouflaged state, looking forward to the alarm on the faces of the advancing enemy when they should find themselves suddenly descending into the bowels of the earth. We referred to it in our discussions as "the troop-trap" and were more than a little conceited about it.

We set about the conversion of the first pit with zest, feeling that after two weeks' hewing of muscular gorse which had resisted every inch of the way it would be restful to feel our spades sinking satisfyingly into the yielding soil. We decided that we would dig the trench and then go off and have a drink to celebrate the completion of our preparations.

But the digging was another thing we weren't ready for. It would be interesting to get a geologist's views on the many rare strata with which we joined battle. The first eighteen inches was composed of round pebbles, about four of which we were able to remove with a really powerful stroke of the spade. Then came what appeared to be a layer of ferro-concrete on which our implements rang and sparked with musical gaiety. After that there were certainly a few inches of dusty soil, but on the first evening's digging this was only reached by one of our number, a mild man who had distressed us on parade by the unconventional manipulations of his rifle, but who had nothing to learn when it came to wielding what he described as a "mattock." He was the only one with the foresight to bring one of these instruments. He had, we gathered, previous experience of this sort of thing, and later on, when he got into his swing with a spade, the rest of us could only stand and watch in admiration. All we had against him

was his knack of burying our jackets in his parapet, so that when they were exhumed we went home with our pockets heavy with powdery soil and large round stones; but even in spite of this he rose high in our esteem.

It took us a fortnight to dig the trench, and when it was done our Section-Leader went off and fetched the Platoon-Commander to come and see what fine fellows we were. This exalted person was not ill-pleased with our efforts, but we felt that the meagre praise he gave us was scarcely in proportion to the hardships we had undergone. Our Section-Leader even ventured to suggest this in a respectful way, but the Platoon-Commander only said something about "child's play" and gave an indulgent little laugh.

We had intended to call his attention to the "troop-trap," but he seemed in a hurry to get away and by some tacit understanding we allowed him to make the discovery without our assistance.

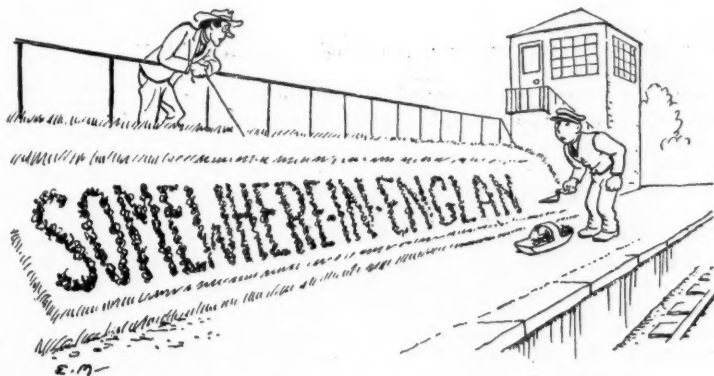
## Speculation

**MURMUR**, murmur, little plane,  
How I wonder once again,  
As above the world you wing,  
Have you swastika or ring!

"The Ministry of Transport has on the arrival of a truck-loa land to 'Somewhere in England four eggs in a nest among the c been looking into the report that d of household coal from the Mid-' a wagtail was found sitting on oal.

It was hinted that if the bird could talk she would have a tale of muddle and delay to tell."—*Birmingham Paper*.

Well, muddle perhaps.



"Don't forget the quotation marks, Mr. Gribble."



## Fables from the Ish

### THE USURPER, THE COOK, AND THE EGGS

A MIGHTY prince usurped a throne, and after the essential preliminary of murdering all the members of the royal house, called the head cook to him for an interview.

"Majesty," said the cook, "how do you like your eggs?"

"I have a soft spot for eggs," said the usurper affably.

"I did not make myself clear," said the cook. "I should have said, How do you like your eggs *done*?"

"How did my predecessor like his done?" asked the usurper.

The cook said "He was a four-and-a-half-minute man."

"Hard-boiled, huh," said the usurper. "Do mine *seven*-and-a-half minutes. And bear the significance of the increase in mind," he added grimly.

The cook made a note, and eggs thenceforth came to the royal table as hard as pebbles. The new Emperor ate a plausible number, until it became less wearing to have the cook murdered too.

### THE TWO SOLDIERS AND THE YAWN

TWO soldiers, yawning during a period of military inactivity, fell into a discussion about the catching nature of the yawn. The first declared that the yawn was not catching unless it could be seen, but the second maintained that it was catching anyhow within a short radius. They decided to experiment and the second soldier went into a tent, announcing that each was to keep a record of his yawns and the time at which they occurred.

Looking out through a hole in the tent, the second soldier saw the first soldier referring to a watch which had been stolen from the second soldier not long before. He came out of the tent again hastily and neither of them yawned for some considerable time.

### THE PRIME MINISTER, THE TOUGHS, AND THE 2.30

AN unscrupulous Mongol prime minister made use of a group of toughs whose duty was to cause to be fulfilled the predictions of a certain prophet on his pay-roll. Thus the prophet would announce that a bridge would collapse, and they would cause it to collapse at the proper time; that a building would turn white overnight, and they would secretly paint it. After some months of miraculously fulfilled prophecies the prime minister, rubbing his hands, told the prophet to announce that Karakoram would win the 2.30. At the same time he told the toughs to see that Ogotai won the 2.30.

Consulting among themselves, the toughs determined to cause Wenchow to win the 2.30.

The toughs backed Wenchow to win. The prime minister backed Ogotai. The prophet complacently backed Karakoram.

Extruh! 2.30 result. 1. Meng T'ien. 2. An Lu-shan. 3. Tangut. 100-8, 33-1, 5-2. Seventeen ran.

### THE ARTIST, THE MERCHANT, AND THE PORTRAIT

AN artist was commissioned to paint a symbolical portrait of a very stout merchant in the guise of Charity routing Avarice, Parsimony, the North Wind, Debts and various other unwelcome personages. After several sittings the merchant said diffidently "Can I have a look?" and the artist replied gloomily "All right."

The sitter came round and had a look and there was a silence for some moments.

At length the sitter, holding up his thumb and pretending to measure with it so as to lend verisimilitude to his criticism, observed, breathing heavily, "Isn't that rather a large figure for Charity?"

"If you remember," replied the artist, "that's what I said when I was first given the commission."

### THE OLD MAN, THE SONS, AND THE SWINDLE

ON his death-bed an old man called for his eight sons and bequeathed to them the secret of how he had made his money.

"I have been for forty years," he said, "in the habit of collecting old tea-leaves, drying them and selling them again as my own delicate blend of tea. I did not tell you before, because I did not want to handicap any of you in your choice of profession. Now, however, that you are all settled and making your way in life, I feel that revealing my dishonesty cannot do you any harm."

One of the sons asked "But how would revealing this before have handicapped us?"

"My boy," said the old man, "I knew very well that if the choice had been presented to any of you between going in for some legitimate business and following mine, you would unhesitatingly have chosen mine. I was not going to tell you my secret until you had studied the advantages of honest toil."

So saying, he died. His sons soon got into the habit of collecting old tea-leaves, drying them and selling them to business acquaintances as new and delicate blends of tea; but only in their spare time.

### THE MUSIC-MASTER, THE CHILDREN, AND THE FAVOURITE SONG

A MAN had a favourite song, and when he became a music-master in a school he made the children sing it. Oh dear, oh dear. R. M.

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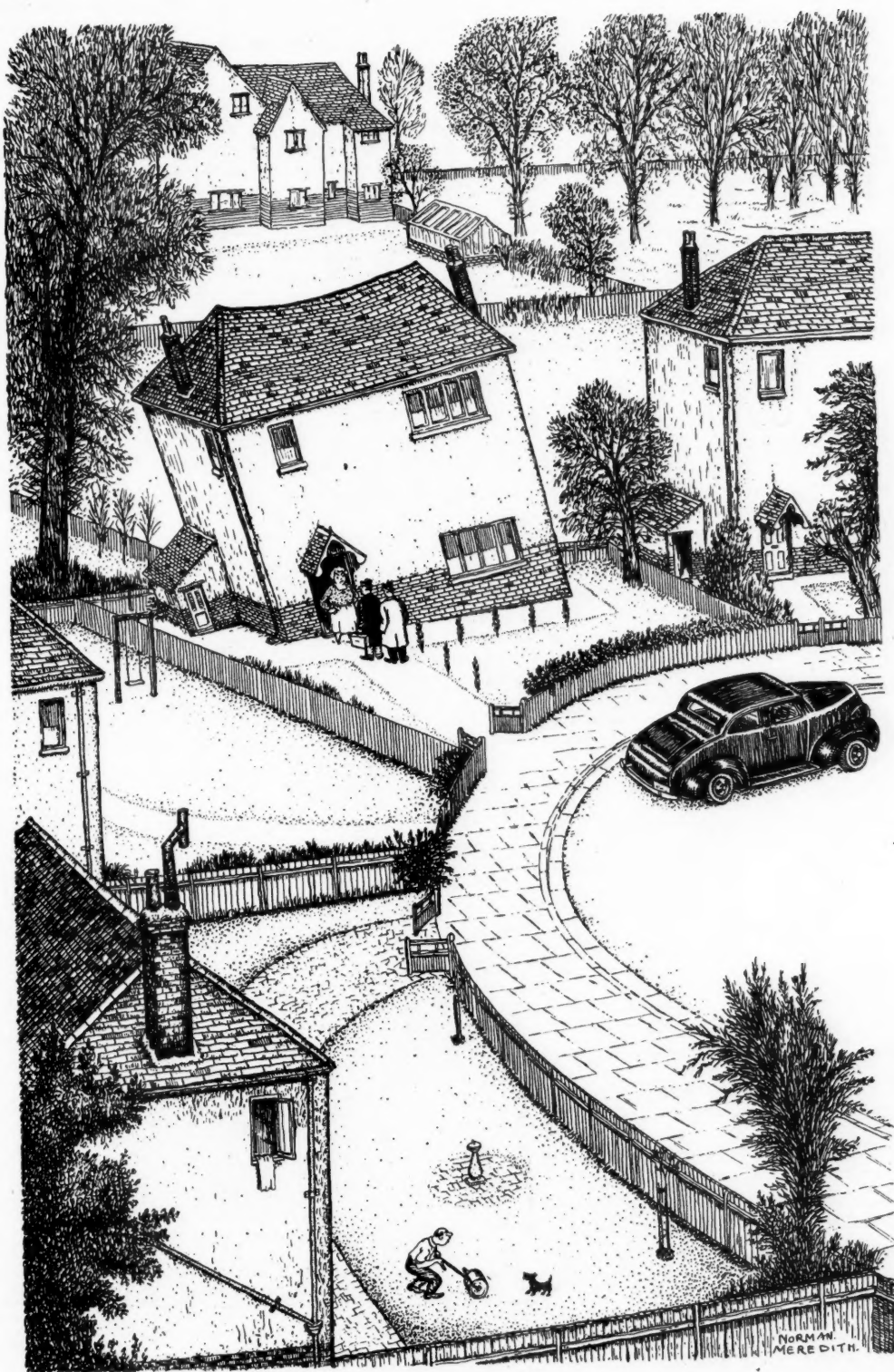
## Home Thoughts

HIGH on the downlands, hazy with the noonday,  
Soft wind singing in the telephone-wires,  
Grass burnt brown with a month of sunshine  
And patched with black from the picnic fires;  
Sparrow-hawks hovering, ragwort waving  
Gently combed by the fingers of the breeze;  
And me with a book and a pair of binoculars  
Guarding the Home with the L.D.V.s.

Curlews piping and stonechats chattering,  
Plovers boisterous in tumbled dives,  
Partridges basking in the war-time knowledge  
Of their much better chances of extended lives;  
Butterflies fighting for a single piece of clover,  
A rabbit regardant and with twitchant ear;  
Dragonflies flashing in jerks across the dewpond  
In which I am cooling some bottles of beer.

Here in the country we listen to the wireless,  
And whatever "morale" means, there's not much wrong.  
Peace on the downland, peace in the valley;  
But the cry of the Minute Men is "How long?"  
And old Joe Burdekin of Dead Man's Hollow  
(Tall Christmas pheasants on rocketing wings)  
Tells me he's just given three old ploughshares  
To be turned into—well, tanks and things.





"We're from the Building Society—what's wrong, lady?"



"What's upset Charlie?"

## On the Water Front

"Kitting Up"

**T**HE lorry rumbled through the great gates, rolling appropriately like a ship at sea.

Two vast petty officers surveyed us grimly. The gates closed. We laughed and said, "Well, we're in now." And also "We're in for it."

For this was the gate of the famous naval barracks at — and who knew what rigours might there await fifty amateur sailors from London River? True, we had come there merely to be "kitted up" in naval rig, and returned forthwith to our little ships. True, we had been sailing those little ships (hot and cold) for ten months, and considered ourselves a sort of veteran. But this was the Navy; and what would the Navy know, or care, about that? Accustomed as we were to the free and easy converse of lightermen and bargemen, we might at any moment say, or do, the wrong thing. Some of us in the fifty-age-group had horrid visions of being done to death with P.T.I. Parties of sailors marching past, during the first brief wait, made us feel small. They were in uniform and we were not. True, they looked a little pale against the fifty weathered veterans, and we suspected that some of them had not been in bell-bottomed trousers very long. But still, they were in uniform, and we were not.

But even while we waited and watched in that first five minutes, the endearing qualities of the Royal Navy began to show themselves. Even the small parties marching here and there advertised that subtle combination of strength and quietness, of discipline and common sense. They marched well and in good order, but without making the act of walking a physical training exercise. And nobody yelled

at them. A good sergeant-major gives the order to "Halt" as if it were a personal insult or a declaration of war. These Chiefs and Petty Officers merely conveyed that they wished the men to halt. And they did halt.

Well, we arrived about 0900 (as we have to say now). At about 1030 we sat down to what, in the Royal Navy, is apparently regarded as a "snack." Mere "elevenses." Tea and a substantial "Cornish pasty" for each man. About 1200 we sat down to the mid-day meal proper. Delicious soup: delicious rabbit: delicious vegetables . . . all cooked by a master. By this time we had decided that life in the Navy was one long feed. The later meals in the day were served at longer

intervals, but all were admirable: and no mother who has a boy at — Barracks need fear his wasting away.

Between feeds we marched about the city (for that is what the great place nearly is) and gradually acquired more and more things to carry and wear — a slick, though smooth, unhurried routine. Oilskins, meal, respirators, meal, dental and medical examinations, meal—well, that is how it seems in retrospect. At last the exciting moment comes for drawing the things to wear. Each man begins with a vast kit-bag, the kind of thing in which one would keep a pig. These are carted from store to store and filled by degrees with well-made but weighty garments — with vast overcoats, enormous boots (2 pairs), with trousers (2) and tunics (2), with hats and overalls and underclothes and socks and shirts. And last of all, did you know that every sailor in H.M. Fleet is given a dear little "attaché case," with lock and key? Well, he is.

Now, when all these presents were crammed into kit-bags, together with the private attaché-cases, knapsacks, respirators, etc., we had brought with us, the kit-bag stood the height of a fair-sized man, and weighed, according to our personal estimate, about three tons. (At the top of two flights of stairs they weigh five.) One felt like the child with too many presents at the Christmas party. All the two days it rained; and stiff new oilskins made heavy-weight-carrying still less convenient. All this might have been trying to the fifty-age-group (and even others), especially as this ancient mariner had been on patrol all the



previous night, had not closed the old eyes at all, and nearly fell asleep in the Cornish pasty. Indeed, all, we think, felt at the end as if they had been through a two days' battle. But the point to be made is this, that the benevolence of the Navy made it an enjoyable battle. An officer and three Chief Petty Officers looked after us like mothers. Heaven knows how many thousands of New Entries they have passed through the machine and seen successfully "kitted up." But one would have said we were the first batch they had ever had the privilege to handle. They might have been doing the job for the first time, for a party of old friends. Things went wrong, as small things must in such a business. We lost ourselves or our way, our oilskins or our identity what-nots: but no one lost his temper or shouted, and we never (we hope we are not making you cry) "heard a cross word" from first to last, much less a swear-word.

Chief Petty Officers . . . what wonders the best of that fine breed are! Cheeks like canvas but smiles like cherubims: chests of oak and hearts as kind as . . . But we shall be making you cry again. Even at that risk, we must say that it is in these men one sees most clearly the solidity, the seasoning, the sureness of the Fleet and the countless centuries of British sea-life.

The Chief who presided over the barrack-room where we ate and slept was Just a Mother to us all. A tough mother, mark you, with a chest like a breakwater—and did he rattle us out of our hammicks at 0545? He did. He did not actually bring us tea at the same time; but there was no sort of assistance or advice that he thought it beneath his dignity to be asked for or to give.

It was fun to sleep in a hammick again; though fatiguing to carry the darned thing about. Nearly twenty-six years it is since first we slept in a naval hammick . . . at H.M.S. *Crystal Palace* in 1914: and twenty-six years have, at least, brought no change in the good and simple world of hammicks. All was as before. The difficult confusion of preparing for the night—where in the world are we to put our stud?—indeed, where can a man put anything? . . . is that our oilskin or is it his? . . . how can we hang everything on that one hook? . . . ought not the head end to be hitched a shade higher? . . . but if we shift it, may not some worse misfortune befall? and why does this man keep butting our bed with his head? All was as before—the great full stuffy room; but stuffier now than twenty-six years back, because of the

black-out—the breathing, the snoring, the dreaming of many men—the forest of hammicks faintly swaying in the dim light, like the leaves of a monstrous jungle—the smell of men, wet clothes and oilskins, the night guard softly making his rounds, the cosy clutch of the hammick and the gentle sway of it if you shifted a limb.

A few things different. Gas-masks. And talk of "Yellows" and "Reds." And orders issuing supernaturally from the wall. And in the next hammick a Zeebrugge V.C. "kitted up" as an ordinary seaman! Good, but lucky man! For here is the one important difference. Twenty-six years ago there hung beside our hammick too the complex, charming costume of an

ordinary seaman; and proudly indeed on a Sunday morning we knotted our ribbons, adjusted anxiously our black silk and white lanyard, set our blue jean collar very square, and "went ashore" at Sydenham. Now, after twenty-six years, we are grander in the "fore-and-aft" rig of a petty officer; and we have a crown and two anchors (gold on Sundays) on our sleeve. Very fine they are, those crossed red (or golden) anchors, and better, we think, than anything a sub-lieutenant has to show. But still we look a little wistfully at the boys in bell-bottoms, in silks and ribbons and blue jean collars, for in this proud rig we first formed fours, were married, and served the King. A. P. H.



"It's quite cosy here—can't think why we haven't sat here before."





"A.T.S., W.A.A.F., V.A.D., W.R.N.S. . . ."

### *The Exile or What Love Can Do*

**H**AD you informed me last July  
that I  
should like living in Bristol  
(considering I was forced here at the point of a pistol),  
I should have made some tart remark  
and gone into the Park  
vowing that I would be residing in a necropolis  
before I left the Metropolis.

But Time, mean Time, has turned me fickle,  
and with that sickle  
of his  
or scythe, or whatever it is,  
he has cut, or at any rate undone  
a lot of strings that bound my heart to London.

My house here is far, far uglier than sin,  
gamboge without and chocolate fudge within.  
The chairs are covered with an orange chintz  
on which recline cushions of a violent quince  
shade.

I am afraid

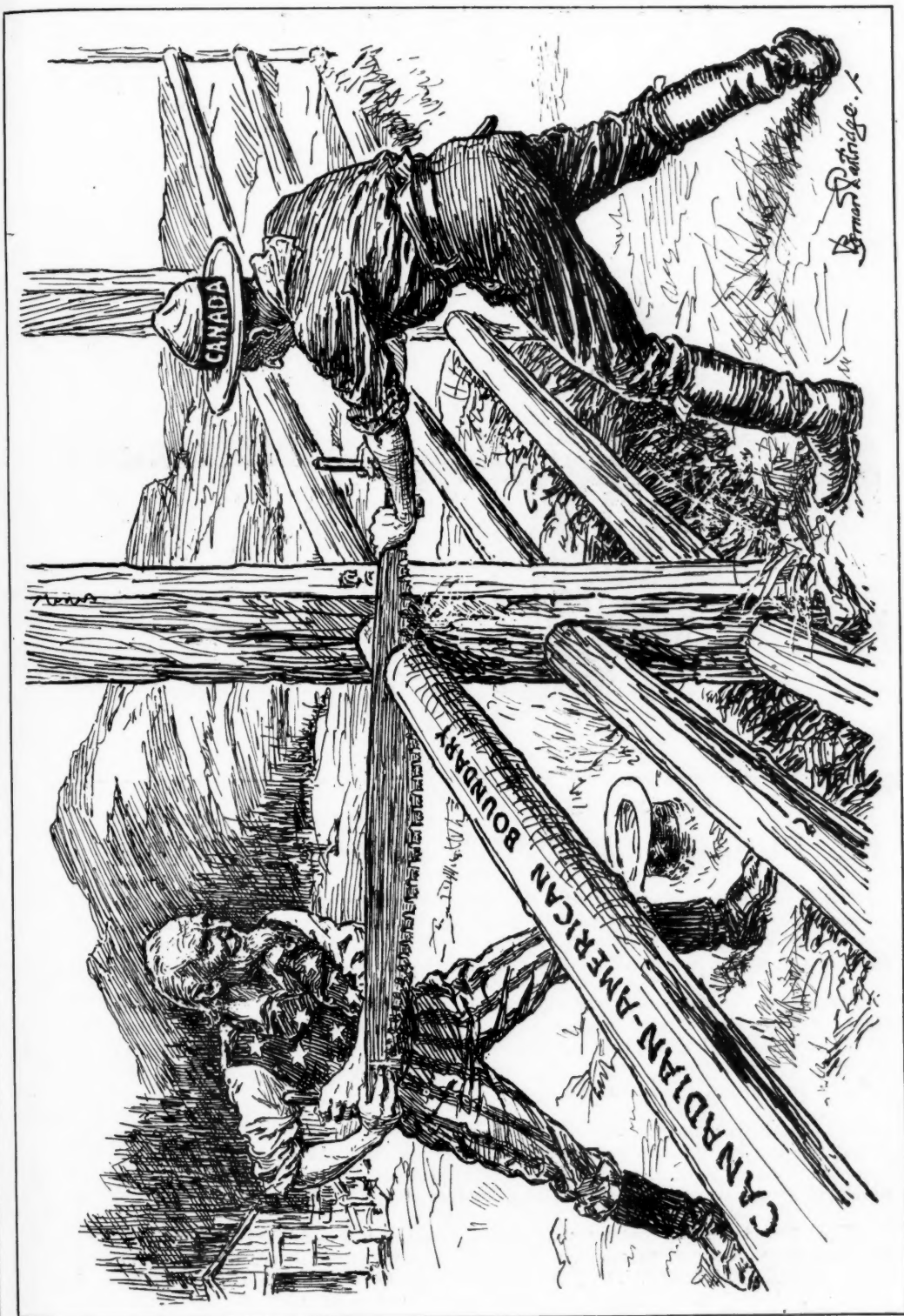
there are a million dinky nooks  
in which hang large brass gongs on hooks.  
The mantelpiece, beside which mellows  
a quaintly painted pair of bellows,  
is garnished with ladies standing on one toe in the buff  
(made of some composite stuff)  
and a china angel sitting on a boulder.  
Upstairs we have Snow White as a toothbrush holder.

In the garden, behind alternate flowers, a gnome  
has made himself an elfin home;  
one cannot pick the tenderest of shoots  
and fail to find a rabbit at its roots.

And yet and yet . . .  
as I stand by the gooseberry net  
of an evening and turn my face  
to the barrage balloons and on, on to the place  
where, in the blue shadows of the dying sun,  
my love polishes his gun,  
I know now that I could never leave Bristol  
(except perhaps at the point of a pistol).

V. G.





### CO-OPERATION

Uncle Sam. "I reckon a little healthy exercise of this sort will be good for both of us."



## Mr. PUNCH'S HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND

**T**HE Air Force fighting the "Battle of Britain," the Navy patrolling the seas, the crews of our minesweepers, the men at searchlight posts and anti-aircraft stations, are in need of extra comforts such as Balaclava helmets, sea-boot stockings, gloves, mittens and woollen waistcoats, and in a few months the need will be greater still.

We ask you to remember these and to think also of the wounded. At any moment their needs may become more imperative. They will not consider themselves heroes, they will not complain; they will be those who have neither fallen in action nor come safely through the ordeal, but are part of the human wastage of war which your action may do something to restore and to console.

Mr. Punch, in expressing his very sincere gratitude for the generous help given by subscribers to his Comforts Fund, would like to suggest that Working Parties wishing to continue their fine effort should consider how great will be the advantage of having plenty of supplies available before the hard weather of winter sets in.

Though we know well that these are days of privation and self-denial for all, we yet ask you, those who can, to send donations NOW, large or small, according to your means, to PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4, in order that every man shall be assured of warmth and comfort.

## Impressions of Parliament

### Synopsis of the Week

**Tuesday, August 20th.**—Lords: Statement on the War.

Commons: P.M.'s Statement on the War and Debate on Policy.

**Wednesday, August 21st.**—Lords: Finance Bill passed.

Commons: Allied Forces Bill given Third Reading.

**Thursday, August 22nd.**—Lords: Questions about Internment.

Commons: Debate on Internment.

**Tuesday, August 20th.**—The P.M.'s survey this afternoon was long and comprehensive, and so he read it; as a result there was less of his sudden overwhelming humour of phrase than usual. But it was a fine speech, honest and full of sober confidence.

After a year of war, he began, we were able to pause and compare this one with the last. Although in fact it was only a continuation of the last, its shape was entirely different. Instead of mass slaughter, this was a conflict of strategy and science. Its consequences had proved quicker and more deadly. And it was all-in, the front line ran through the factories, and civilians were as much engaged as soldiers. This new kind of war was well suited to our national genius.

The Germans had lowered their technical standards by expelling the Jews. Our island position, our command of the sea and our friendship with the United States gave us peculiar resources. HITLER lay "sprawled over Europe," and "we must resolutely

prepare ourselves for the campaigns of 1941 and 1942." It did not follow that only defence lay ahead. As well as convincing the enemy that we could go on indefinitely, we must give him



WINSTON'S NEW HAT

heavy and unexpected blows. The road to victory might be shorter than we thought, but this must not be counted on.

Turning to the question of our blockade, the P.M. regretted the necessity of refusing to allow food to pass through to the invaded populations of Europe. Our blockade must continue to be strict. Any food going in would be stolen by the Nazis and so prolong the agony of Europe. Germany had claimed not only to hold ample reserves of food but also to have made arrangements for feeding her captive peoples. These had had good stocks when they had been invaded. It must also be remembered that food-stuffs such as fats, potatoes, and milk were useful for munitions. "Let HITLER bear his responsibilities to the full and let the peoples of Europe who groan beneath his yoke aid in every way the coming of the day when that yoke will be broken." In the meantime we would arrange that food could be rushed to an enslaved area as soon as it was cleared of German forces. When the Nazi power was shattered this offer applied to Germany and Austria as well.

Europe had had a disastrous few months; so much so, that at the beginning of May it would have seemed incredible that now we should actually

be stronger than we had ever been before. "We have not only fortified our hearts but our island." An immense mass of munitions had come from America. The whole British Army was at home. Our Navy was far stronger than it was this time last year. "We hope our friends across the water will send us timely reinforcements." (At this Mr. KENNEDY, in the Gallery, smiled broadly.) We had got the better of U-boats and magnetic mines. Merchant tonnage was up on its pre-war figures. So were our food stocks and our food production. There must be no complacency, but the people had a right to know that there were solid grounds for confidence. The British Empire was invincible.

The great air battle over this island had gone very much in our favour, thanks to our fighter pilots; "never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." It was essential to HITLER's prestige that he should continue his air attacks on this country as long as he could and—here Mr. CHURCHILL used a significant phrase—"as long as any preoccupations he may have in respect of the Russian Air Force allow him to do so." Lord BEAVERBROOK had worked miracles. The enemy still had more machines, but our production had now passed his and American production had still to develop. First we should gain parity, then that superiority on which "in a large measure the decision of the war depends." Our bombers were doing splendidly and the havoc they caused would steadily increase. Even if HITLER was at the gates of



THE CONJURER  
LORD BEAVERBROOK



"CURTAIN"  
(Until September 5)  
MR. ATTLEE



India it would be no use to him if the springs of his war power were shattered at home.

France's defection had deeply damaged our position in the Middle East, and we had decided to withdraw from Somaliland; but we had complete sea command of the Eastern Mediterranean and large armies out there, and "far larger operations no doubt impended." Condemning the "men of Vichy," Mr. CHURCHILL paid tribute to General DE GAULLE, to whom we had promised the restoration of France. As for war aims, he did not think the time had yet come for elaborate speculations about the future of Europe. The Nazi tyranny had first to be finally smashed.

But in one direction we could see ahead a little. The idea of leasing defence bases in Newfoundland and the West Indies to the United States had come first from us, in close agreement with Canada; the lease would be for 99 years and there would of course be no transference of sovereignty. This collaboration between the British Empire and the United States was a most important step which he viewed without misgiving. "I could not stop it if I wished; no one can stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full

flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days."

He was cheered and cheered. In subsequent debate Mr. HORE-BELISHA, saying that Mr. CHURCHILL had never made a greater speech, begged for a larger army, with its own air command. The Lords had a statement on the war from Lord CALDECOTE, and Lord HALIFAX wound up the subsequent debate with a speech in which he revealed that Lord GORT's dispatches would be published as soon as possible and in which he enlarged on the tonic effect which the knowledge that it was now on its own had had on the British Empire.

Wednesday, August 21st.—Debating the Finance Bill, the Lords proved anxious about inflation, and in the Commons Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR explained how enemy air casualties were divided into Destroyed, Probably Destroyed, and Damaged, and how pilots were on their honour and carefully interrogated. During the recent battles, he said, the numbers in the second and third categories had sometimes exceeded those in the first. After Mr. ATTLEE had told the House that the P.M. would probably make another statement on September 5th, when the House reassembles, the Allied Forces Bill, which legalizes the position of

foreign armies on British soil, was given a Third Reading.

Thursday, August 22nd.—In both Houses internment of aliens was the subject of the day, but before Sir JOHN ANDERSON made his statement in the Commons he circulated at Question-time a long answer about the working of air-raid warnings. This explained that the policy of the Government remained to limit warnings to districts which were thought to have been selected for attack, because otherwise the effects on production would be serious.

When the question of the harsh treatment of aliens was raised on the adjournment, Sir JOHN declared that he would have resigned had he not agreed with the military in May on the urgency of general internment. Control must continue, but at the same time conditions would be quickly improved. He then announced a series of changes, which included the appointment of a tribunal with special knowledge of German and Austrian politics. Italians were being weeded by a committee under Sir PERCY LORAIN.

Earlier, Members had welcomed Mr. RAMSBOTHAM'S announcement of a new Directorate for young people's P.T., and at four o'clock the Debating Academy broke up, looking slightly guilty, for a fortnight's holiday.



## Pipes-Krieg

(It is reported on good authority that the German Army is learning the bagpipes.)

THE German loves to keep his foe  
Embarrassed and perplexed,  
He likes to think you never know  
What he'll be up to next.

Tales of new arms of unknown types  
Come filtering through the Press,  
And now we learn he's at the Pipes  
With German thoroughness.

Not, be it said, by twos and threes,  
Th' effect of which we know;  
He'll brave the battle and the breeze  
With thousands at a go.

His dark intent, though unrevealed,  
Is plain for all to spot:  
When next he meets upon the field  
The grim nostalgic Scot

His native music poured en masse  
As from one vast machine  
Will act like lachrymatory gas  
And blind the laddie's een,

And war-worn Jocks and raw recruits,  
Heaving their arms away,  
With wild and fraternizing hoots  
Become a ready prey.

The Southron on the other hand,  
Though blest with nerves of steel,  
Will find it more than he can stand  
And give a frightened squeal,

And one and all will turn to run,  
A rabble put to rout,  
Till never an English tank or gun  
Remains to stick it out.

And shall our pride and valour melt  
Like dewdrops in the sun  
By this foul blow beneath the belt?  
I couldn't say for one.

We can but trust our fertile Staff  
With some neat counter-trick  
Will give our Island Home the laugh;  
Only they'd best be quick. DUM-DUM.



"In the Navy it would be gun crew Numbers One and Two, but with you lads of the Merchant Service it'll be just Bill and 'Arry."

## At the Play

"TAKE BACK YOUR  
FREEDOM"  
(NEIGHBOURHOOD)

IF this had been produced when WINIFRED HOLTBY wrote it, five years ago, it would have been more interesting, but still it would have been a not very good play on a subject bristling with difficulties for the theatre. Her first and only one, it is enriched by a number of clear and penetrating statements and it is a work of evident and sometimes moving sincerity; but it is the play of a novelist experimenting in an unfamiliar medium, and Mr. NORMAN GINSBURY, who has revised it, cannot be blamed because contemporary history has made us all sick to death of dictators and has reduced some of Miss HOLTBY's observations, acute five years ago, to the level of the commonplace.

The trouble about dictators is that they alternate between being gods in public and squalidly normal in private, and neither part easily bears prolonged satire. HITLER yells his head off on a dais for a couple of hours and then comes back to a sticky gorge of jam-puffs. The sharp contrast is worth noting, but dramatically very difficult to get at; and if the dictator is shown trying to keep up appearances among those who call themselves his friends, the result is a pomposity which after a few laughs grows dull.

But the main point made by Miss HOLTBY and Mr. GINSBURY remains, the more we learn about dictators, absolutely sound; and that is that they are men whose early uncertainty as individuals has driven them to seek self-justification on a grand scale and at the expense of humanity. We have seen a little mess-waiter whose head was stuffed full of Wagnerian dreams of warriorhood plunge Europe into agony to show what a hell of a chap he is. And here we see Dr. Arnold Clayton, bruised in his vanity since childhood by the

dominance of his mother's personality and unhappy at his ineptness in contact with his fellows, take advantage of a political plan—just as HITLER

took advantage of a national form of genuine socialism—to steer himself into the full flood of power.

He had had successes before, as a don and an economist and an Under-Secretary, but they were normal successes for a clever young man and insufficient balm for his secret pride. Suddenly intoxicated one night by the sea of foolish faces beneath him at a political meeting, he yielded to an impulse to tell them of the futility of the Government of which he was a member; and from that moment, until his mother shot him at the end of the play for the sake of world peace, he never looked back. Honest intentions to tighten up national discipline and give back self-respect to the under-dog were soon swamped by greed for more and more power and by the necessity to resort to more and more criminal means to this end.

Six scenes develop the process, now so painfully familiar to the German and Italian peoples. Clayton is soon caught up in the whole silly round of jack-boots and uniforms and

shouting and persecution and hate. The first to see that he has sacrificed an ideal to a personal ambition is his mother, Mrs. Clayton, whose own personal ambition for him and through him is the root cause of his actions. This she comes to realize, and the later scenes between them, much the best in the play, reveal his tragedy as well as hers.

Mr. FRANK ALLENBY succeeds in showing the moral and intellectual degeneration of a fine mind, but fails to suggest that Clayton has either the animal magnetism or capacity for fiery self-inspiration without which a demagogue cannot become a big shot. As Mrs. Clayton, Miss BEATRICE WILSON gives a clever and sympathetic performance. Mr. MARTIN WALKER is good as the Goering of the piece; and Mr. BECKETT BOULD as a cynical Labour-turned-Tory leader, Mr. HUGH MILLER (who produced) as a Press Peer, Miss RUTH TAYLOR as one of the fool women who cluster round



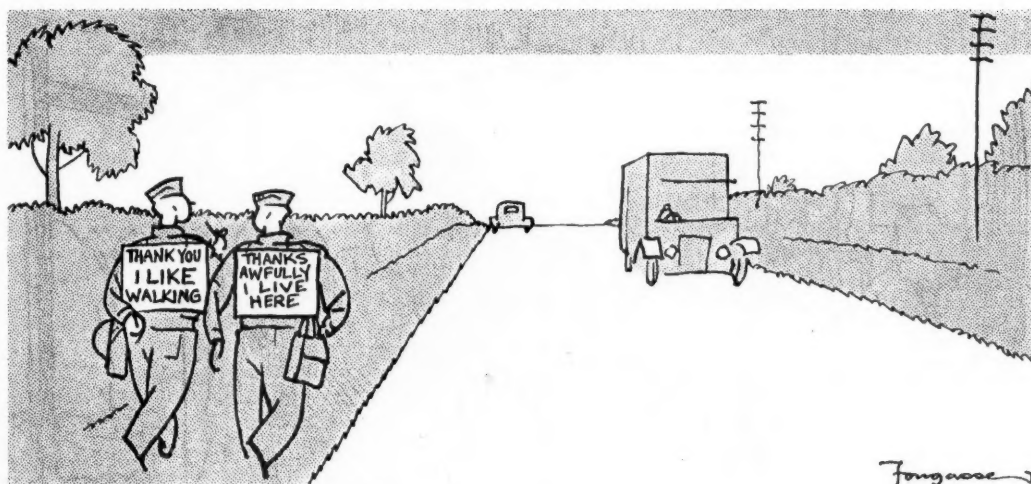
JOY THROUGH STRENGTH

Major Richard Lawrence. . . . . MR. MARTIN WALKER  
Dr. Arnold Clayton . . . . . MR. FRANK ALLENBY



THE LEADER BACK IN THE NURSERY

Dr. Arnold Clayton . . . . . MR. FRANK ALLENBY  
Mrs. Clayton . . . . . MISS BEATRICE WILSON



dictators, and Mr. GEORGE HAGAN as the *Song-Fuehrer*, all help. Mr. HAGAN makes the very most of his small part and earns our blessing by being funny.

The play would benefit by cutting, and this production could well be speeded up.

ERIC.

## At the Festival

(BUXTON)

FESTIVALS and Black-outs can hardly be good mixers, but Buxton unites the amenities of a spa with the stout heart of a citadel. MACAULAY once set on record the indomitable nature of Derbyshire in some affray with the Crown and explained it in terms of the stony terrain and "the truculence of the inhabitants." Perhaps truculence is a hard word to apply to the Buxtonians, so famous for their Crescent, their chalybeate, and their croquet, but stubbornness will fit. HITLER interfered drastically with their Theatre Festival last September: so they appointed August 15th, HITLER's appointed day of triumph in London, as their opening date for the only remaining Theatre Festival in England.

It was a nice gesture, with a full moon to bless and brighten it, to throw silver on the aforesaid croquet-lawns, and to make the noble Crescent the shimmering back-cloth for any eighteenth-century masquerade. The Old Vic Company, enabled by a good fairy called C.E.M.A. (Council for

the Encouragement of Music and the Arts) to take Buxton's graces in its stride to the grimmer setting of industrial Lancashire, responded to the eighteenth century suggestion with a very lively handling of *She Stoops to Conquer*.

So what Buxton relished yesterday, Burnley will be welcoming to-day and Wigan later on. There is ample reason for such a welcome, since GOLDSMITH's comedy has all the qualities that make a homely classic. It has the classic plot of mischief, misunderstanding, and naughty impersonation. It has warmth of heart as well as the flick of wit. It is for all times and places and classes and ages, and it will be part of the Old Vic's function to remind school-children that a play which has been turned to a school-text can still be a glorious piece of romping magic when taken back to its proper home of the lit and curtained stage, with its "mountebankery" of mummery wiggled and booted for the confusions of lost travellers worse confounded.

The Company has a charming Kate in Miss RENÉE ASCHERSON, the tilt of whose nose is one of those slopes on which the Comic Muse delights to dally. Miss ESMÉ CHURCH is a finely formidable Mrs. Hardcastle and Mr. DAVID HORNE fusses and frets with the genially explosive manner proper to her much-vexed man. For young men-about-town turned into young wanderers about country, Mr. ALEC CLUNES and Mr. DAVID MARKHAM are obviously well equipped, and the former's bashfulness with Kate gives some new values to a familiar pleasure. Mr. GUTHRIE has directed the play

simply and quickly and inventively in Mr. FURSE's simple and satisfactory settings. We must travel light these days and this Company must travel far before it gets back to the Waterloo Road. It is in tackle, as in talent, well furnished.

Its other piece strikes deeper. The Spanish dramatist SIERRA wrote a study of feminine devotion called *The Kingdom of God*, which Mr. and Mrs. GRANVILLE-BARKER translated. This now has a new name, *The World is Yours*, and retains its old quality, that of a faithful study of spiritual conflict. Should the daughter of prosperity renounce all, including the motherhood for which she was so admirably suited, to be the warden of other people's children and castaways? Does she compound with injustice by being so meek a servant of mercy? The social questions are raised dramatically and never too didactically answered. The Spanish scene, though mainly framing poverty and squalor, has its richness of tint and the theme has its richness of emotional contrast. Miss CURIGWEN LEWIS plays the lady of good works most effectively in all the phases of her life: in its pains of self-denial as in its raptures of devotion.

In Miss SONIA DRESDEL the Company has an actress who can create characters, as vivid as various, in a flash.

As a contrast to GOLDSMITH the piece has a value added to that inherent in its own integrity. It reminds one that at Festivals the drama is all the more enjoyable when it adds reflection to frivolity.

I. B.





"Well, anyway, dear, we've got the attic cleared."

## News from Iceland

**M**Y DEAR MOTHER,—You will be surprised to see the address at the head of this letter. You may well think that Iceland is no place for a son of yours to skulk in this tremendous hour of history. You may well think that the cold storage facilities of the United Kingdom have not yet been exhausted. You may well think . . . But it does not matter. The War Office has thought instead. I am in Iceland.

I must confess that my state of mind is still that of the slightly dazed but patient ox. To travel long distances by train on a wet Sunday afternoon to the port of X; to board the large luxury liner Y and find that Ye Olde Tudor Lounge is a temporary store for underwear—cellular, light and the like; to hang about on the river Z redolent of history and fish; to travel apparently for years in the teeth of a gale that

the knowledgeable called a stiff breeze; and finally to land on a shore closely resembling an amalgamation of a stone merchant's yard and a slag heap—it is definitely shattering. And then to find in the town a dance band whose leader hails from Wigan and *chooses* to live in Iceland. Of course I shall recover.

But while the limitations of the censorship prevent me from describing my present location in terms which would disclose my section of the clinker mass, I may perhaps be permitted to describe what is the most attractive feature of the landscape. I refer to the Iceland pony.

It has a mythical air. In the first place it's not big enough. To my insular mind the horse has a standard shape, and while one may permit of minor variations in size and colour, a horse to be a horse has to conform to

certain standards. These ponies are not only the wrong size; they behave like horses of mythology. I mean they prance, they snort, they practically emit fire from their nostrils, and their tails stick out rigidly like emblems of defiance. Naturally they look attractive.

The pony I attempted to ride assumed that stance at once. We had decided to spend Sunday afternoon in healthful recreation on pony-back. Negotiations concluded, we approached the herd or pack and each pony was allotted its victim. Mine may have been ultra-nationalistic in outlook, or merely a Fifth Column agent. Whatever the reason, its mind was made up.

There were no stirrups. I placed one hand on the saddle and vaulted lightly up. Either gravity is different here or the beast moved, for I cleared it easily and landed on the lava outcrop



This initial set-back was perhaps a blessing in disguise, for while the pony stood convulsed with mirth I gained the saddle and took a couple of turns of mane in my right hand. I will not recount the adventures of the others, but it was some time before we started.

The Iceland pony does not trot. It runs. This imparts a peculiar motion to the saddle. You may recall that electric instrument designed for massaging the face and head. It is a poor imitation of nature, the difference being that here it is not applied to the face or head, except possibly at gymkhanas. It may be that the ponies gallop—normally. They prefer to keep that a secret.

While the ride was not a success, in retrospect it has many points of interest. For example, my pony stopped short at the sight of any motor vehicle but would resume as soon as it disappeared. The pony of my immediate companion was more sensitive. She (I'm sure it was a she) did not start

again. Another had no fear of traffic at all but refused to cross running water. That occasioned several considerable detours. A fourth disliked the sight of a scythe. Another just hated exercise. In short, we resembled a rather complicated mathematical problem. "If A starts from X on a pony which can travel at ten miles an hour on an unfrequented road, and G on a pony which, etc., etc., where will they meet?" The answer of course is, in the mess just before dinner.

But there we are. There are more things to Iceland than mere ponies. There is, for example, the average southern limit of pack ice, a point that will concern us intimately in a few month's time. There is the problem of which set of stones across the lava is the road and which Nature's caprice. There is the problem of what to do with nineteen hours of darkness each day in December. All these, and others, our well-known British adaptability will solve—we hope.

My unfortunate batman, Killey, is not yet acclimatized. He said to me sadly this morning, "I wish I were back in that pill-box on Southend pier. I met a girl last night and asked her if we should go for a walk in the moonlight some night. She said, 'Why wait till September?' It does throw you out when you don't know if it's sunset or daybreak."

It certainly does.

Your loving Son,  
HAROLD.

### Signs of the Times

A YEAR ago, and long before,  
I lightly scorned the wives who wore  
A regimental badge or pin  
In diamonds, gold, or even tin.  
Now I am not above such trifles:  
My husband's joined the King's Royal  
Rifles. J. G.



"... but Grandma won't believe me, so will you please sound the air-raid warning again?"

## Letters of Lotti

**V**ERY RESPECTED MISTER PUNSCH,—What fearful news hear we this week in Hundskadaverberg! Namely that you Englanders again have violated all humane war rules through the abusement from the Red Cross. Already one time in France have you done it through painting of Red Crosses on prison camps, through what so dirty ruse have you got our men bombed by their own comrades; now it is that you have actually shoten at two of our hospital aeroplanes, with the Red Cross plain marked thereon, no? Wounded and sick men should inviolate be, yet when a general from our Luftwaffe and his staff, what suffer from war nerve-shock, musted by doctor's orders to fly in the health-bringing upper air over Bristol or the havens from London and Southampton and Plymouth for to restitute their good-beings, your guns have forced them to be bringed down. How had could the planes be hostile-minded with nothings than sick men therein? That maps and field-glasses and a small machine-gun was found in the one was naturely that they was there put by your secret state polizei; and that the other plane exploded as it hit ground were not from bombs who she carried (what lying!) but, so the radio have us told, from spontane combustification of hot atmosphere, or perhaps oxygen taken for the sick. Doktor Wahrsinn say perchance it be that a wounded reconnaissance general thereon was at that time smoking an ersatz cigar, but we have argued this thoroughly and think the Herr Doktor has might try to do a joke; for Uncle Willi say the ersatz cigars be good really—especial when with Sauerkraut chopped up. Heil Hitler!

The evening from Wodensdag young Frau Heidenangst has runned in much tearful. It seems that, as she to market go, the shop is full-popped with a strange kind meat, of what many is been just sent out Denmark to our town Hundskadaverberg. (For the kind Danskers send food to the Reich: not because we therefrom need have, but out of love for their so kind, helprich conquerors.) But no person want to buy this unknown meat, all though it come an order to do it for the Vaterland. Endly S.A. men arrive and explicate that one should must it do. After which all haste themselves to buy, except three what is too bad hurt in the explicating. But how to cook him

young Frau Heidenangst not know, for he is called bacon and she have not him before meeted. Luckily Tante Hilde remember how she have cooked him once before long time and show she. What strange things happen to us in time of war!

Great instruction was received by us all at home last night in listening at the Frensch radios in the house of Herr Unmensch who is, how you say, passionate at radio, that is, he has radio fanny. Onely, we actually listen Paris, who say how normale is the life of the capital under the beneficent German occupation, and how German soldiers stop themselves on the streets to pat the heads from little childer, and how is so much aboundingness from eats that there be enough for all, even the German soldier, what naturely nothing buy till the civilists have got all what they necessitate. Twoly, we listened Tours, where we heard that the Frensch childer all love the brave field-greys which so kindly stop themselves to head-pat all without-hurting one, and that when the civilists have bought all their eats requirements, aboundingness is there for the German army, and that, after the false Frensch government is gone, all is the same as beforely under the occupation from our kind German troops; and threely, we listen Rouen, where the sayer say that in the country distrikts there be eats for all and overeats for the German soldier, and that life go on under German occupation so better than never before, and that in the round-lying cornfields constantly could one see kind field-greys stop themselves to chuck the childer almost gently under the chin. In the deed, it were so nice to learn from so variated independent truth-springs that France's voice, befreed from the oppressive allyance with perfid Albion, now can speak without fear of terroristik brutalisms from unhuman plutodemokrat Reynault and such blood-thirsties, and utter her fresch, jung happyness in its own words. Heil Hitler! Pardon spellings!

Thereafter we listen Hamburg and it is telling how your planes daily be being downstruck in scores by our valourful attacking Luftwaffe in the Battle from Britain, so that hardly one soon left will be to defend your cowering peoples, and already there are none even to attempt their feeble bombing on our inviolate land. The sayer was to continue to explicate our

air superiority but in its middle the radio outfade. Not understandable, and when Herr Unmensch try in the stead to listen Bremen, nothing either. Some little hitching perhaps in his machine, even though he be radio fanny!

Yesterday again one time was a collectings on the streets for "Pennies for the German army." I hear that you in England also collecting days have, all though not naturely just for small love-gifts for a brave army, but hopefully for to stop from starving the worklesses what no more can work in your so be-bombed factories, isn't it! Moreover, you was always make collection through young girls and women—no doubt has you not the men at avail—while by us was always the collect done through our fine young S.A. men in the town and in the village. On this way is much more collect—all though Herr Leerbauch, what go out forgetting his purse, fall and hurt his head by explicating at the S.A. man and musted go in the hospital.

Greetings,

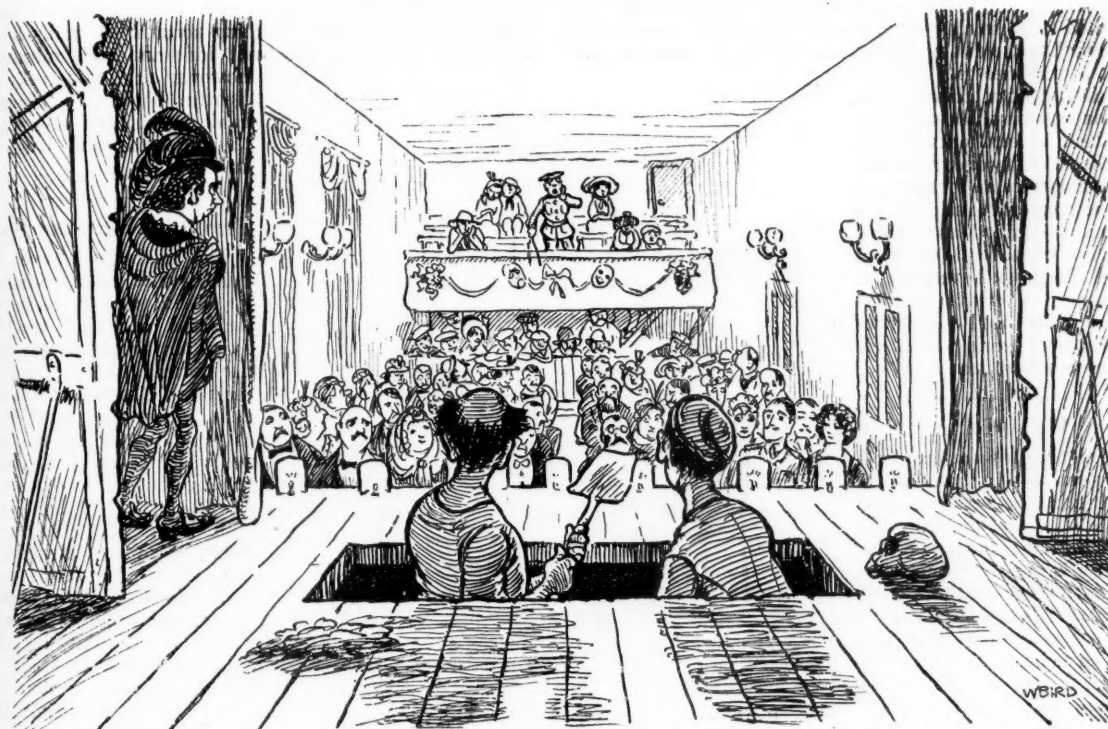
LOTTI.

*PS.*—Uncle Friedrich have just in the paper us showed where she say that a gipsy fined is been ten marks because that he try to eat a hedgehog what he have catched without to give up a meat-coupon. I tell this to you so you can know that not only is not shortage of good food in Germany but all eat-foods is well-organizedly rationed, and that none of us is near at starve or hunger. Uncle Friedrich say he discover it comik that it say the gipsy only "trying to" eating the hedgehog, but my Cousin Ernst explicate that no doubt the thought of his bad crime, that he have do it without upgiving a meat coupon, made him closely choke from shame wherefrom he not can eat proper. Tante Hilde tell that perhaps more probably the bristles be tough for him and should must to be boiled more, how she done for us last week. Uncle Willi not say a word for a while, but suddenly arise himself and go out to look in the garden hedges. Unfortunately find he only one rat, but he is not too bad. It is only the ersatz rats who is bad.

A. A.

"Young Lady, aged about 25. Must be used to figs."—*Situations Column.*  
It used to be prunes and prisms.

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Voice from gallery (during grave-digger scene in "Hamlet"). "AIN'T YER GOING TO 'AVE NO PARAFET?"

W. Bird, August 29th, 1917

## Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

### The Borderer

MODEST JOHN BUCHAN wrote an autobiography that tells little of effort and triumph and gives not much of an inmost self, but which portrays in luminous prose many of the leaders of his generation and idealizes to sentient beauty a hundred lovely places that he knew. In *Memory Hold-the-Door* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 12/6) he remembers MILNER, who "separated the sense from the nonsense" in the deliberations of the Cabinet; HALDANE, who was always ready to expound the points at issue, even when he had not grasped them; RAMSAY MACDONALD, man of "endearing innocence"; HENRY WILSON, with a "gift of making a situation more clear than God intended it to be," and a score of others. Most visibly there emerges in this book

neither the writer's zest for a gallant tale—though all his romances were spun to please himself—nor even his enthusiasm for such picture-history as is recaptured in his *Montrose or Raleigh*, but his faith in the common people and his response to the appeal of the decorated earth. JOHN BUCHAN is seen as his most alluring self in bits of inimitable descriptive writing where the wide splendours of South Africa contrast with the little valleys of his own Border counties and the little streams that flow in them—Liddel and Teviot, Ettrick and Yarrow, Esk and Rede. These names to him were music.

### Politics and Principle

That admirable body which is known familiarly as Chatham House was happily inspired when it promoted the publication of the *Speeches on Foreign Policy* (MILFORD, 10/6) delivered by Lord HALIFAX during the last six fateful years. Many of them are documents of historical importance;



many of them outstanding pieces of oratory. It is true that in so far as they are statements of, or apologies for, our international policy they make rather a melancholy record of vain endeavour; but as expositions of first principles they always command respect. And that is the ground on which Lord HALIFAX is most at home and at his best. This is not to deny him the virtues of a practical politician. On the contrary, apart from his too tardy recognition of the true enormity of the thing called HITLER (in which, after all, he was with the majority), he displays a steady grasp of realities, as is particularly well shown in his consistent attitude to the League of Nations and its fatal limitations. Nevertheless Mr. H. H. E. CRASTER, who selected them, is right when he speaks of their "philosophic quality" as the distinguishing mark of these speeches; and that is why one gets greatest satisfaction from those in which the expression of the speaker's idealism is least encumbered by the necessity of expounding temporary fact, as, for instance, in the memorable address delivered at Oxford last February. But whatever its occasion, Lord HALIFAX's oratory is always of a classic gravity, which finds need neither of the satirical scoring-point nor of the emotional appeal.

### Welsh Farm

Of all the post-war problems that keep rearing their expectant heads through the smoke and dust of the present, the final relation of the land to the factory is much the most important. The author of *I Bought a Mountain* (HARRAP, 8/6) suggests that there will soon be "a bureaucrat for every farmer." He stands for no further immolation on "the shabby altar of industry" but a bitter fight for freedom of individual effort. These welcome sentiments of intransigence are, however, only glosses on the great gospel of the land as preached by a young Canadian fruit-canner who came back to make a Welsh farm his own. When Mr. THOMAS FIRBANK purchased Dyffryn he embarked on the unknown adventure of sheep-breeding. That he won through was not only due to his courage and good sense but to the generosity of neighbours who pooled their knowledge and help for his benefit. His tale of straight farming is so enthralling that its by-product chapters (of catering for the summer tourist and mountaineering exploits by the author and his wife) come as rather rueful interruptions to matter more inspiring.

### Country House in War-time

As Miss RACHEL FERGUSON says at the very beginning of *A Footman for the Peacock* (CAPE, 8/-), there are country

houses and country houses—"the type where the wrong kind of guest tips the staff too much . . . the mansion where the right kind of guest is hardly able to tip the staff at all." Readers will not find the latter sort at Roundelay, which is pretty full of the family, including aunts (of whom two have not been on speaking terms since youth), and a stop-gap and permanent domestic staff ranging from Sue the kitchen-maid to "Old Nursie" who, in her fierce dotage, throws trays of disliked food from her window and also routs the billeting-officer. Sue is the heroine of the strange old story within the modern one, and the peacock, yes, the peacock, is the hero. Some may think that Miss FERGUSON has been mistaken in weaving a plot dealing with reincarnations into a witty and charming account of family life in war-time. But it is very well done and adds substance,

however airy, to a really delightful book. The Roundelays themselves are people to live with and laugh at and love.

### Two Birds with One Stone

The difference between the murder that *Detective-Inspector Greith* was investigating and the one that troubled *Inspector Wagstaffe* was that the former had a "load of people with motives and three definite suspects" while *Wagstaffe* had "no motive and no suspect at all." Captious readers of *One Man Saw Them Die* (HARRAP, 7/6) might complain that Mr. ANTHONY WEBB has drawn too emphatic a contrast between the gruff and rude *Greith* and the consistently courteous *Wagstaffe*. But this is the only conceivable complaint that can be lodged against a story in which our old friend Mr. *Pendlebury* ambles his way to sane and successful conclusions. Nor must Mrs. *Mallaby* and Mr. *Pendlebury's* servant *Sam* be omitted when honours for distinguished service are being distributed.

### A Charmed Life

Those of us who are already acquainted with Mr. DAVID HUME's young detective, *Mick Cardby*, will know full well that he is an expert in getting into tight places and out of them. Now, in *Eternity, Here I Come!* (COLLINS, 7/6), he is matched against one of those master-criminals who appear too frequently in sensational fiction, and after marvellous adventures he lives to fight again. But escapes, however miraculous and cleverly contrived they may be, are apt in bulk to become wearisome, and although no one who enjoys a recital of perilous adventures would prescribe a rest-cure for young *Cardby*, the fact remains that if he were less rash he would be far more credible.



"Oh, yes, I almost forgot; we had an incendiary bomb through the roof this afternoon."

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